



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

April 15, 2004

THE ADMINISTRATOR

Honorable Tim Pawlenty
Governor of Minnesota
130 State Capitol
75 Constitution Avenue
St. Paul, Minnesota 55155

Dear Governor Pawlenty:

Today, we enter a new chapter in our country's clean air commitment. President Bush outlined this chapter when he directed the Environmental Protection Agency to implement a national Clean Air strategy committing us to make the years ahead one of the most productive periods of air quality improvement in our nation's history.

The last 35 years have seen a growing commitment to clean air and a progression of science and technology that has informed our decision-making and guided our actions. I often think of our clean air history as a relay where a baton is passed from generation to generation and from Administration to Administration. It is a relay in which we must all be involved and a relay where our participation is never done. This Administration has made a commitment to accelerate our clean air progress so that all Americans live healthier, longer, more productive and prosperous lives. It is a commitment to no turning around or backsliding in air quality improvement.

Part of our nation's commitment to clean, healthy air deals with reducing levels of ozone. That effort began in the 1970s with a 1-hour standard for ozone — now, in 2004, the more protective, health-based 8-hour ozone standard is ready for implementation.

I am pleased to announce that your entire state is in attainment, meaning that across your state all areas meet the more protective, health-based 8-hour ozone standard. That is good news for the citizens of your state. It is also a challenge to not only maintain but also continue the progress you have made toward clean air.

During 2004, we are issuing a suite of national Clean Air Rules as part of the President's strategy that will specifically address the transport of pollution. These national rules and other clean air actions will bring the vast majority of areas of the country into attainment with this standard over the next 15 years. The Clean Air Rules, when fully implemented, will cut power plant emissions of sulfur dioxides, nitrogen oxides and mercury by nearly 70 percent, and will also reduce emissions from off-road diesel fuels, vehicles and engines by over 90 percent — those black puffs of smoke are going to be a thing of the past. Together, these Clean Air Rules will build on the tremendous progress made over the last 30 years, and do it in record time.

We have a national strategy and tools to provide people with cleaner, healthier air now and in the future. The result is more protection, faster and ensures that clean air and a prosperous economy will be this generation's contribution to our children and grandchildren.

Sincerely,

/s/

Michael O. Leavitt

cc: Ms. Sheryl Corrigan, Commissioner
Minnesota Pollution Control Agency